

SGN Safe and Warm Communities 2025-26

Funding scheme outcomes and impact

April 2026



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Background

The Safe and Warm Community scheme was a SGN-funded scheme in partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). Funded through the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance, it was set up in 2022.

The scheme's overall aim was to create a network to bring together and support grassroots charitable organisations to work at a targeted local level, providing vital energy safeguarding support for vulnerable and fuel poor customers. The scheme covered SGN's network areas in England and Scotland.

CSE deliver the scheme on behalf of SGN – this means that we promoted the scheme, recruited organisations to receive funding and set them up to deliver the best outcomes for their communities. We provided ongoing support through training events, networking opportunities and one-to-one support and advice throughout the programme.

This report summarises the outcomes and impacts of the scheme across the final funding rounds that ran from December 2024 to February 2026.

The learnings from this scheme are being taken forward into a similar project, but one which involves three Gas Distribution Networks as partners (SGN; WWU; NGN)

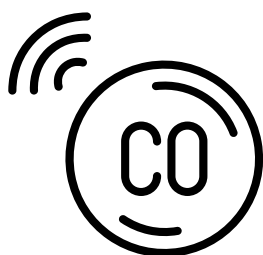




Households supported

26,376

Households supported with energy advice
and other crisis support

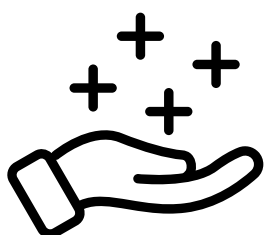


18,491

Households provided with carbon
monoxide (CO) safety awareness advice

16,336

Households supported to sign up to the
Priority Services Register (PSR)



13,892

Households supported with accessing
benefits eligibility checks

12,470

Households supported to
access debt advice





Impact on households

This page includes reflections from funded organisations on the impact the scheme and their work has had on the community they support.

“Offering practical support with energy saving tips, CO awareness, PSR registration, items such as energy vouchers, food, heat the person items and CO monitors... helped clients to trust in the support offered, leading them to ask for support with anger management, addiction, mental health, employment and training and digital skills.”

The Vine Centre

“By engaging in discussions surrounding energy use, advisors were able to provide personalised solutions. Relationships built through these sessions often uncover deeper problems, allowing our advisors to address issues at their root . Development of our warm space, with soup, rolls and hot drinks created a space in which all participants felt comfortable and safe.”

Healthy n’ Happy

“It has raised people’s awareness of practical tips they can use, as well as their rights and entitlements. It allowed our outreach assistant to undertake casework, which led to support and advocacy as well as onward referrals.”

The Upper Norwood Library Trust



Who was funded? - Scotland

This table lists the organisations funded in the 2025 - 26 round.

Funded organisation	Geographic area covered
ALI Energy	Argyll & Bute, Highland
Brechin Bucaneers	Brechin, Angus
Cumbernauld Poverty Action	Cumbernauld & Kilsyth, North Lanarkshire
Edinburgh Old Town	City of Edinburgh
Fifers for the Community	Kirkcaldy, Fife
Glasgow's Golden Generation	Glasgow City
Healthy n Happy	Glasgow City
Home-start Clackmannanshire	Clackmannanshire
Kirrie Connections	Kirriemuir, Angus
Pilgrim Care	St Andrews, Fife
REAP	Moray
The Food Train Limited	Lothian, Borders and Dumfries & Galloway
The Play Centre Glasgow	Glasgow City
Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre	Glasgow City



Who was funded? - England

This table lists the organisations funded in the 2025-26 round.

Funded organisation	Geographic area covered
Network of International Women	Brighton
Quiet Down There	Brighton
Selsey Community Forum	Chichester
Sussex Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus	Sussex
Sussex Community Development Association	Sussex
Family Support Work	Sussex
4Sight Vision	West Sussex
Tech Resort	East Sussex
Status Education CIC	East Sussex
The Vine Centre	Hampshire
Unity (Southern) Ltd	Hampshire (Test Valley)
Green Isle of Wight	Isle of Wight
Mid Kent Mind	Kent
East Malling Centre	Kent (East Mailling)



Who was funded? - England

This table lists the organisations funded in the 2025-26 round.

Funded organisation	Geographic area covered
Friendly Faces of Kent	Kent (Isle of Sheppey)
Fusion Maidstone	Kent (Maidstone)
Swale CVS	Kent (Sittingbourne)
The Upper Norwood Library Trust	London (Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark)
The Baytree Centre	London (Brixton)
Spring Community Hub	London (Camberwell)
African Refugee Women	London (Croydon)
Afghanistan and Central Asian Association	London (Lewisham, Hounslow, Croydon, Ealing, Greenwich)
Time and Talents	London (Rotherhithe, Bermondsey)
Flashy Wings	London (Southwark)
Community Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services	London (Wandsworth, Richmond, Wimbledon)
Ukrainian St Mary's Trust	London (Hillingdon, Stratford, Richmond)
Sapphire Community Housing	London (Central and Middlesex)
Hope Trust Oxford	Oxford
The Lighthouse	Surrey



Impact on funded organisations

This page includes reflections from funded organisations on the impact the scheme has had for building their capacity to deliver energy advice and related support.

"It has been amazing - we have been able to employ new staff members and grow our staffing by 2. We have well trained volunteers who understand the energy project fully. This has led us to supporting many more clients. We have built better relationships with third party organisations which is key to our overall growth."

The Vine Centre

"This was a whole new area for Fusion and it has opened up a new pool of clients to work with. New partnerships have also been created with other organisations to offer this service in the community."

Fusion Maidstone

"It has given our staff and volunteers an in depth knowledge of how to support our local residents with fuel support. Helped us all feel more confident in giving advice and signposting to the correct agencies. This project has embedded us in the local community to be the go to organisation for support."

Friendly Faces of Kent



Key challenges

Some of the key themes around challenges organisations experienced on this scheme include:

Theme	Key feedback
Navigating complex situations	Clients would often present with multiple complex challenges (such as debt, or mental health challenges). This support would require either a) ongoing casework which was stretched project budget/capacity, b) specialist knowledge not held by advisors, or c) referral into support agencies which may have long waiting lists. Clients can 'slip through the net' when services don't link up.
Engagement challenges	Several organisations reported a learning curve in engagement, and had to adopt new approaches. For example, struggling during the summer months, or working with certain communities such as individuals who were homeless, or with low levels of literacy.
Accessibility of advice and resources	This project funded 14 organisations to procure or produce 'accessibility' resources, as well as centralised provision of translated resource sheets. However, accessible resources remains important with provision of translation devices or more materials if wider languages.
Building trust and sharing information	People not wanting to talk or share information, or not knowing important information, like their energy supplier or meter type.
Fuel vouchers	Being unable to support with fuel vouchers for people not on a pre-payment meter (including not being able to support people with prepayment meters run by exploitative landlords).
Advanced energy support	59% of organisations indicated that they supported clients with low carbon, renewable or smart energy advice. However, this was reported as challenging by many advisors.



Key learnings

Some of the key learnings from this scheme, based on reporting from the organisations, and CSE's reflections and experience, include:

There is a continued and growing need for services. The cost of living is still rising and leading to an increasing need for support. This means staff and volunteers are managing heavier case loads.

Support needed is a mixture of direct support such as access to fuel vouchers and heat the person items to address crisis situations, as well as longer term behaviour change and income maximisation support.

Having energy advice provided in safe environments within the community means clients who don't trust other institutions are accessing support.

Provision of energy advice often unlocks conversations about wider issues and subsequent support or signposting around these.

Adding energy advice to their service has allowed organisations to reach new clients and build stronger trusted relationships with other agencies (e.g. debt services, food banks, housing support, or mental and physical health agencies). These impacts will last beyond the end of the project.

Provision of printed materials and physical items (e.g. thermometer cards & CO monitors) are essential hooks for starting conversations and providing advice. The provision of resources in other languages, and additional accessibility funding, on this scheme was reported as hugely valuable.

There is a wider need for systemic change to address unfairness embedded in issues such as the standing charge, and the transition to smart systems.

There is an increasing need for advisors to have knowledge of low carbon technologies and the smart tariff landscape, or of suitable signposting routes. However, this can be intimidating in a rapidly changing context.

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